

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 423, nays 0, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 219]

YEAS—423

Aderholt	DeLauro	Issa
Alexander	DeBene	Jackson Lee
Amash	Denham	Jeffries
Amodei	Dent	Jenkins
Andrews	DeSantis	Johnson (GA)
Bachmann	DesJarlais	Johnson (OH)
Bachus	Diaz-Balart	Johnson, Sam
Barber	Dingell	Jones
Barletta	Doggett	Jordan
Barr	Doyle	Joyce
Barrow (GA)	Duckworth	Kaptur
Barton	Duffy	Keating
Bass	Duncan (SC)	Kelly (IL)
Beatty	Duncan (TN)	Kelly (PA)
Becerra	Edwards	Kennedy
Benishek	Ellison	Kildee
Bentivolio	Ellmers	Kilmer
Bera (CA)	Engel	Kind
Bilirakis	Enyart	King (IA)
Bishop (GA)	Eshoo	King (NY)
Bishop (NY)	Esty	Kingston
Bishop (UT)	Farenthold	Kinzinger (IL)
Black	Farr	Kirkpatrick
Blackburn	Fattah	Kline
Blumenauer	Fincher	Kuster
Bonamici	Fitzpatrick	Labrador
Bonner	Fleischmann	LaMalfa
Boustany	Fleming	Lamborn
Brady (PA)	Flores	Lance
Brady (TX)	Forbes	Langevin
Bralley (IA)	Fortenberry	Lankford
Bridenstine	Foster	Larsen (WA)
Brooks (AL)	Foxo	Larson (CT)
Brooks (IN)	Frankel (FL)	Latham
Broun (GA)	Franks (AZ)	Latta
Brown (FL)	Frelinghuysen	Lee (CA)
Brownley (CA)	Fudge	Levin
Buchanan	Gabbard	Lewis
Bucshon	Gallego	Lipinski
Burgess	Garamendi	LoBiondo
Bustos	Garcia	Loebsack
Butterfield	Gardner	Lofgren
Calvert	Garrett	Long
Camp	Gerlach	Lowenthal
Cantor	Gibbs	Lowe
Capito	Gibson	Lucas
Capps	Gingrey (GA)	Luetkemeyer
Capuano	Gohmert	Lujan Grisham
Cárdenas	Goodlatte	(NM)
Carney	Gosar	Luján, Ben Ray
Carson (IN)	Gowdy	(NM)
Carter	Granger	Lummis
Cartwright	Graves (GA)	Lynch
Cassidy	Graves (MO)	Maffei
Castor (FL)	Grayson	Maloney,
Castro (TX)	Green, Al	Carolyn
Chabot	Green, Gene	Maloney, Sean
Chaffetz	Griffin (AR)	Marchant
Cicilline	Griffith (VA)	Marino
Clarke	Grijalva	Massie
Clay	Guthrie	Matheson
Cleaver	Gutierrez	Matsui
Clyburn	Hahn	McCarthy (CA)
Coble	Hall	McCaul
Coffman	Hanabusa	McClintock
Cohen	Hanna	McCollum
Cole	Harper	McDermott
Collins (GA)	Harris	McGovern
Collins (NY)	Hartzler	McHenry
Conaway	Hastings (FL)	McIntyre
Connolly	Hastings (WA)	McKeon
Conyers	Heck (NV)	McKinley
Cook	Heck (WA)	McMorris
Cooper	Hensarling	Rodgers
Costa	Herrera Beutler	McNerney
Cotton	Higgins	Meadows
Courtney	Himes	Meehan
Cramer	Hinojosa	Meng
Crawford	Holding	Messer
Crenshaw	Holt	Mica
Crowley	Honda	Michaud
Cuellar	Horsford	Miller (FL)
Culberson	Hoyer	Miller (MI)
Cummings	Hudson	Miller, Gary
Daines	Huelskamp	Miller, George
Davis (CA)	Huffman	Moore
Davis, Danny	Huizenga (MI)	Moran
Davis, Rodney	Hultgren	Mullin
DeFazio	Hunter	Mulvaney
DeGette	Hurt	Murphy (FL)
Delaney	Israel	Murphy (PA)

Nadler	Rohrabacher	Stivers
Napolitano	Rokita	Stockman
Neal	Rooney	Stutzman
Negrete McLeod	Ros-Lehtinen	Swalwell (CA)
Neugebauer	Roskam	Takano
Noem	Ross	Terry
Nolan	Rothfus	Thompson (CA)
Nugent	Roybal-Allard	Thompson (MS)
Nunes	Royce	Thompson (PA)
Nunnelee	Ruiz	Thornberry
O'Rourke	Runyan	Tiberi
Olson	Ruppersberger	Tierney
Owens	Rush	Tipton
Palazzo	Ryan (OH)	Titus
Pallone	Ryan (WI)	Tonko
Pascarell	Salmon	Tsongas
Pastor (AZ)	Sánchez, Linda	Turner
Paulsen	T.	Upton
Payne	Sanchez, Loretta	Valadao
Pearce	Sanford	Van Hollen
Perlmutter	Sarbanes	Vargas
Perry	Scalise	Veasey
Peters (CA)	Schakowsky	Vela
Peters (MI)	Schiff	Velázquez
Peterson	Schneider	Visclosky
Petri	Schock	Wagner
Pingree (ME)	Schrader	Walberg
Pittenger	Schwartz	Walden
Pitts	Schweikert	Walorski
Pocan	Scott (VA)	Walz
Poe (TX)	Scott, Austin	Walters
Polis	Scott, David	Watt
Pompeo	Sensenbrenner	Waxman
Posey	Serrano	Weber (TX)
Price (GA)	Sessions	Webster (FL)
Price (NC)	Sewell (AL)	Welch
Quigley	Shea-Porter	Wenstrup
Radel	Sherman	Whitfield
Rahall	Shimkus	Williams
Rangel	Shuster	Wilson (FL)
Reed	Simpson	Wilson (SC)
Reichert	Sinema	Wittman
Renacci	Sires	Wolf
Ribble	Slaughter	Womack
Rice (SC)	Smith (MO)	Woodall
Richmond	Smith (NE)	Yarmuth
Rigell	Smith (NJ)	Yoder
Roby	Smith (TX)	Yoho
Roe (TN)	Smith (WA)	Young (AK)
Rogers (AL)	Southerland	Young (FL)
Rogers (KY)	Speier	Young (IN)
Rogers (MI)	Stewart	

NOT VOTING—11

Campbell	Johnson, E. B.	Pelosi
Chu	Markey	Wasserman
Deutch	McCarthy (NY)	Schultz
Grimm	Meeks	Westmoreland

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1731

Mr. ENYART changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 1960.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER of Florida). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 256 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in

the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1960.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1735

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1960) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, with Mr. WOMACK in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 1960, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, which overwhelmingly passed the Committee on Armed Services. In keeping with the committee's tradition of bipartisanship, Ranking Member SMITH and I worked collaboratively to produce this bill and solicited input from each of our members. We've already adopted 169 amendments during markup and look forward to a robust debate the remainder of the week on the floor.

The legislation advances our national security objectives, provides support and logistical resources for our warfighters, and helps the United States confront the national security challenges of the 21st century. The bill authorizes \$552.1 billion for national defense in the base budget. It also authorizes another \$85.8 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations, consistent with the House budget, and the bill contains no earmarks.

Of critical importance, the bill takes serious and significant steps to end the crisis of sexual assault in our military. This includes stripping the commanders of their authority to dismiss a finding by a court-martial; prohibiting commanders from reducing guilty findings to lesser offenses; establishing minimum sentencing requirements for sexual assault; extending whistleblower protections to those who report rape, sexual assault, or other sexual misconduct; and other vital measures. Based on the years of work and oversight our committee has done on this critical issue, I share Senator LEVIN's reluctance to remove the commander from the decision process for crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The only way to change the culture is to hold commanders responsible and accountable for their actions and decisions.

Elsewhere in the bill, despite historic cuts to our Armed Forces, we prevent military readiness shortfalls from becoming a readiness emergency. We restore flying hours for the Army and Air Force squadrons, direct money to help reset equipment returning from Afghanistan, and relieve some of the military's maintenance backlogs.

The bill also provides our warfighters with resources and authorities they need to win the war in Afghanistan and to pressure al Qaeda and its affiliates. We fully fund a series of important authorities that support the transition in Afghanistan and U.S. national security interests. However, we prohibit the use of the majority of those funds until the Secretary of Defense certifies that U.S. priorities have been accommodated in a bilateral security agreement.

□ 1740

We have made controlling costs a top priority. However, the mark guards against achieving false, short-term savings at the expense of vital, long-term strategic capabilities. For example, we prohibit the premature retirement of Navy cruisers and amphibious assault ships, critical vessels that are vital to the Pacific-focused strategy. The bill also continues investments in oversight for key systems while preserving our capacity to meet future challenges.

The bill continues our care for our warfighters, veterans and their families with the support they earned through their service; and it mandates fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability within the Department of Defense.

The bill reduces the number of general officer billets and works to end redundancies in military headquarters and task forces.

For 51 straight years, the National Defense Authorization Act has been passed and signed into law. Congress has no higher responsibility than to provide for the common defense. And with that in mind, I look forward to passing this bill for the 52nd consecutive year.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 4 minutes.

I want to thank Chairman MCKEON and the entire committee—and most importantly the staff. It's always this time of year when our staff never sleeps and does an amazing job of pulling this bill together.

We, once again, worked in a very bipartisan fashion, worked the bill through the process—a series of hearings, the markup last week. I thank the chairman for his excellent leadership in continuing that bipartisan tradition in the hopes of, for the 52nd straight year, getting our bill done. So I appreciate working with him and with all the members of the committee and the staff.

This bill, overall, sets the right priorities, I believe. It makes sure that our military is funded and that our troops get the equipment and support that

they need to carry out the missions that we ask them to do. That is something General Dempsey says all the time: We'll do whatever you ask us to do; just make sure that you provide us with the resources to do it.

Whatever missions we as policy-makers decide the military should perform, it's our obligation to make sure that it's funded. I believe this bill does that. It particularly prioritizes Special Operations Forces, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, and the kind of equipment that we will need to confront the terrorist asymmetric threats that are so central to our challenges right now on national security.

As the chairman mentioned, it also takes steps on the sexual assault problem. I will say that no piece of legislation is going to fix this. The military needs to change its culture and prioritize the protection of the men and women in our service. This legislation will help, certainly; but this is a huge crisis right now that the military has not yet stepped up to. I think it is one of the most important challenges that we face in national security.

This piece of legislation also recognizes that we are still at war. It funds the ongoing effort in Afghanistan to make sure that our troops have the support that they need to carry out that mission.

However, there are a couple of things in the bill that I am concerned about. I believe that we do need to close Guantanamo, and I have an amendment before the Rules Committee which hopefully will be made in order that will set us on a process to do that. I agree with people who say that we can't simply close it tomorrow, we need a plan. My amendment would require that the President come up with such a plan in 60 days and implement it as soon as possible.

I continue to be concerned that the President has the power to indefinitely detain any person captured in the United States who is designated to be an enemy combatant. That is a level of executive power that I do not think is necessary; And as we have seen in recent weeks, people are growing concerned about the amount of power the executive branch has. Again, I will have an amendment to try to change that as well.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning—sequestration. This bill is marked to a level that assumes sequestration will not happen. I think that's appropriate. That's where we're at and what we have to do, but it points up the challenge of sequestration. If sequestration happens, this bill is going to have to be cut by between \$40 billion and \$50 billion. Where would that money come from? How would we make that work? Especially the way sequestration works, mindless, across-the-board cuts. Because the sad truth is that's the likely outcome. There is no pathway out of sequestration that we've seen. I thank the chairman for his leadership in continually bringing home how im-

portant this is, but we haven't gotten there yet. We need to keep emphasizing that.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to my friend and colleague, the vice chairman of the Armed Services Committee, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Intelligence, Emerging Threats and Capabilities, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY).

Mr. THORNBERRY. I appreciate the chairman yielding.

I think the first thing that should be said is that it is a tremendous credit to the chairman and the ranking member that we are where we are today. It may be true that for 51 straight years a defense authorization bill has been signed into law, but that doesn't make it easy to do number 52.

There are still a number of complex and even some controversial issues. And so to have this bill before us today coming out of the committee on a vote that is so strong I think is truly a credit to the leadership of the chairman and the ranking member and the staff who have worked very well together.

I also want to express particular appreciation to the ranking member on our subcommittee, Mr. LANGEVIN, because that, too, has been a partnership in dealing with a number of complex issues, including Special Operations, cybersecurity, science and technology, and military intelligence issues.

One of the key priorities for us on this subcommittee has been oversight. If you think back 2 years ago, in this bill we instituted a quarterly reporting requirement for certain counterterrorism operations involving Special Operations. Last year, we had a quarterly reporting requirement on cyber operations. This year, in the full committee mark, is a reporting requirement involving sensitive military operations, including lethal and capture operations that is designed for oversight before, just after, and, in a broader sense, after these events have occurred. Oversight is a critically important part of everything the committee does, especially in these complex areas.

There are a number of other provisions, Mr. Chairman, dealing with military intelligence, cyber, Special Operations, and science and technology that take important steps forward in helping this country to be safer.

I will note I find it strange, the administration seems to oppose requiring the Defense Clandestine Service to focus its collection on defense priorities. That is what we require in this bill, and for some reason that gives the administration heartburn. I hope we can continue to have conversations with them about it because it seems to me that's exactly what a defense clandestine service should be focused on.

There are other priorities here dealing with chem/biodefense and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency that deal with some of the issues most in the news today—think of Syria and other problem spots around the world.

The key point, Mr. Chairman, is it has taken a lot of work to get to this point; we have a lot of amendment debate to come. But it is truly a credit to the staff, to the chairman, to the ranking member of this committee that something so important, so complex has come to the floor with such overwhelming bipartisan support. We'll have differences, but I hope and trust that it will leave the floor in the same way.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlelady from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ), the ranking member on the Air and Land Subcommittee.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. I want to first begin by complimenting the chairman of the Tactical Air and Land Forces, Chairman MIKE TURNER. He has really been a delight to work with. His steady and thoughtful leadership has really allowed us to, I believe, make a good mark in this bill.

Under his leadership, the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee worked in a very bipartisan fashion. We developed a set of oversight legislation and funding recommendations that I think really looks at cutting waste, shaping programs, and making sure that our men and women in our military are ready to go.

First, the subcommittee's portion of H.R. 1960 supports many of the high-priority recommendations and desires of the President's budget. For example, H.R. 1960 provides \$8.1 billion for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program, \$5.2 billion for Army aviation upgrades, \$3.2 billion for 21 EA-18Gs and F-18 upgrades, \$1.4 billion for the V-22, and \$1.3 billion for the U.S. Marine Corps ground equipment.

In addition, the Armed Services Committee increased funding in some parts of the DOD budget that came from the President where we felt that there were inadequate funds. Specifically, the bill provides an additional \$400 million for the National Guard and Reserve equipment account and adds funding for an additional F-100 engines by \$165 million, and increases advanced procurement funding for 29 Navy F-18 aircraft by \$75 million.

□ 1750

Beyond these funding increases, I want to point out that we made reductions—over \$463 million worth of reductions—in this funding bill. It's never easy to reduce or to cut programs, but I think we did a very good job in making sure that as we move forward we will have the systems that we need.

Finally, H.R. 1960 includes important oversight legislation, especially for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, for the ground combat vehicle, for the individual carbine, the Stryker vehicle, and for body armor for our men and women of our military.

All of these provisions are good government, and I look forward to voting for this bill.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to my friend and colleague,

the chairman of the Subcommittee on Readiness, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by thanking Chairman MCKEON for his leadership and Ranking Member SMITH for the extraordinary job that both of you gentlemen have done in bringing this bill together—bringing people together to make this happen. I also want to thank the ranking member of the Readiness Subcommittee, MADELEINE BORDALLO, thank you so much for your leadership and for your cooperation to make our effort on the Readiness Subcommittee as successful as it was.

Today, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1960, the fiscal year 2014 National Defense Authorization Act. While this bill will not fix all of the Nation's readiness challenges, it does go far in addressing depleted force readiness levels and associated levels of assumed risk.

Specifically, the bill prohibits the Department from proposing, planning, or initiating another round of base realignment and closure commission elements—a measure that's critical, in my view, given the fiscal uncertainties we face as a Nation.

This bill helps our military members by restoring vital readiness accounts, such as the Army and Air Force flying programs; increasing funding for facility sustainment; increasing funding for Army depot maintenance and rest; increasing funding for ship depot maintenance; and prohibiting the retirement of amphibians and cruisers the Navy proposed to retire 10 to 15 years early.

With successive rounds of budget cuts and the disastrous effects of sequestration, readiness rates remain at historic levels, and these levels are unacceptably low. Our warfighters are at risk, and we owe it to them to make sure that we put dollars back to make sure that the readiness of our Armed Forces does not in any way suffer. We want to make sure that our men and women have what they need, making sure that they continue to have overwhelming superiority on the battlefield. That's what this Nation has always done. It is our obligation to make sure that that continues.

While we have restored the Air Force and Army flying hours programs and bolstered facilities sustainment and depot maintenance, we will need to remain focused on readiness challenges in the months and years to come. Those readiness challenges will continue. Especially as we retrograde from Afghanistan and reset our force, we cannot forget the need to maintain readiness.

As I close, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the members of the subcommittee and the staff for their unyielding support for the men and women of our military. Our Nation faces many challenges, as this bill makes clear.

I want to remind this Chamber that we owe a debt of gratitude to those who selflessly serve our Nation—those

who volunteer to put themselves in harm's way. That's what makes our Nation great. We owe them the highest amount of respect in getting this bill done in their best interest.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina, the ranking member on the Seapower Subcommittee, Mr. MCINTYRE.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the National Defense Authorization bill, which the Armed Services Committee passed last week with overwhelming support, and thank my colleagues, Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH, for their hard work in making sure this bipartisan measure would be done the right way, and to help our men and women in uniform.

Specifically, I am pleased that this bill strengthens our national defense, supports North Carolina military bases with a \$355 million investment in military construction, and makes key investments across the Nation to help make sure that our servicemen and -women have the tools they need to do their job.

This measure authorizes \$552 billion for national defense spending and \$85.8 billion for overseas contingency operations.

It also supports current law, which mandates an automatic 1.8 percent annual increase in troop pay, and it rejects proposals to increase some TRICARE fees or establish new TRICARE fees, which many servicemembers and veterans have long been concerned about.

I am also pleased that the committee made sexual assault prevention and prosecution a cornerstone of this legislation. And I am particularly pleased that this bill includes an amendment authored by my good friend and colleague across the aisle, Representative WALTER JONES, a fellow North Carolinian, to protect the religious freedom of military chaplains to be able to close a prayer according to the dictates of their conscience, faith, and training.

The committee also included an important provision that Representative JONES and I both worked together on to require periodic audits of Berry Amendment contracting compliance by the DOD inspector general.

I can tell you, as the ranking member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, I would like to thank my colleague, Chairman RANDY FORBES, for his work on our section of this bill. The Seapower portion of the bill carefully cuts waste in some programs while also improving Congress' ability to oversee the DOD. It includes provisions for the Gerald Ford class aircraft carrier, multiyear procurement language for E-2D and C-130J aircraft, and several other provisions that provide additional oversight of important programs, including two of the Navy's largest unmanned aircraft programs.

It also gives the DOD permission to begin retirement of some old KC-135 refueling aircraft that have been in storage for many years. With the new tanker program—the KC-46A—coming on line, it is “on cost” and “on schedule,” two phrases that we love to hear, not only in the committee but also on behalf of our taxpayers. I am glad we are giving DOD more flexibility in these tough budget times to manage its inventory of aircraft.

Also, the Seapower portion has \$14.3 billion for shipbuilding that would authorize a total of eight new ships. It authorizes \$934 million of ship construction funding to ensure that the Virginia-class submarine DDG-1000 class destroyer, DDG-51 class destroyer, and joint high-speed vessel programs stay on schedule.

With regard to the aircraft programs, this bill fully funds the administration's request for all major aircraft programs in our jurisdiction, including the Air Force's new bomber program.

The Seapower portion of this, being on budget and on time, is something I know that we all can support. It is clear this entire bill is one that has strong bipartisan support, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to my friend and colleague, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Chairman, the military personnel provisions of H.R. 1960 are the product of an open, bipartisan process.

H.R. 1960 provides our warfighters, veterans, and military families the care and support they need, deserve, and have earned. Specifically, this year's proposal reforms the way the Department of Defense must address sexual assault in the Uniform Code of Military Justice and provides significant additional support, especially in the form of dedicated legal assistance and whistleblower protection to victims of this terrible crime.

In addition, the mark would support the services' requested end strength while ensuring the Army and the Marine Corps adhere to the limitation on reductions mandated in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013.

It reaffirms the committee's commitment to the operational reserves by requiring minimum notification before deployment or cancellation of deployment and provides authority to improve the personnel readiness of the National Guard.

It also requires the Secretary of Defense to review and make improvements to the Integrated Disability Evaluation System for members of the Reserve components.

Further, it authorizes transitional compensation and other benefits for dependents of a servicemember who is separated from the Armed Forces because of a court-martial and forfeits all pay and benefits.

This bill does not include the request for military retirees to pay more for health care.

In conclusion, I want to thank Mrs. DAVIS and her staff for their contributions and support in this process. I particularly appreciate the active, informed, and dedicated subcommittee members, supported by the professional staff. Their recommendations and priorities are clearly reflected in the Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014.

I urge all my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1800

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from California (Mrs. DAVIS), the ranking member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. I want to thank my colleagues on the committee for working together to bring forward a good bill. My thanks, of course, to Chairman WILSON and to the committee staff for working in a bipartisan manner.

The bill contains a multitude of provisions to address the issue of sexual assault; and while it may seem that this year Congress focused on sexual assault in the military, the reality is that this committee and its members have been working hard to address this issue, which demands our attention, for the last several years. This committee has, once again, put forward a number of proposals; but as much as we would wish that legislation alone will stop someone from committing a sexual act, we know that is not the case. It will also not stop the fear of retaliation, which prevents a number of servicemembers from reporting a sexual assault.

This problem and how we deal with it has to start and end with those who wear the uniform, but it is important that we provide them the tools they need to effectively change the system and, ultimately, the culture by holding perpetrators accountable and commanders and prosecutors to the highest standard. Whether through bystander intervention, command climates that do not tolerate or condone sexual harassment and innuendo, and appropriate prosecutions and command actions, our servicemembers are ultimately the change agents who need to step forward.

This bill also focuses on the dependents and families who have sacrificed so much as well and who have been the backbone of support for our servicemembers through over a decade of war. Military families also bear the scars of war, and many need help as well. I am pleased that the bill includes a number of provisions to support families, including a provision that seeks to track the number of dependents who have taken their own lives by suicide. While the number of suicides for Active Duty members has increased, we have heard anecdotal evidence that the same holds

true for dependents, and the bill seeks to determine if the Services can begin to track these individuals as well so that we can determine the best course of action to also address this critical problem.

Included are several provisions to address issues within the Reserve components, including a requirement that members of the Reserve be provided at least 120 days' notification of their deployments. We have been in conflict for more than a decade, and it's time that the Services ensure that, when individuals and units are called to deploy or if their orders are canceled, they have adequate time to prepare.

I would like to mention, though, Mr. Chairman, that there is one provision which, I think, could adversely impact the morale, well-being, good order, and discipline of the force. It is a provision that extends protections to the actions and speech of servicemembers. In essence, this provision protects an individual who engages in hateful or discriminatory speech or action, and a commander may take action only when actual harm occurs.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I yield the gentlelady an additional 30 seconds.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. So if this language becomes law, a servicemember could engage in such speech and action for as long as and as much as desired, and a commander could only act against the individual when, say, the first shot was taken. I don't believe that was the author's intent, but I do believe that the language as currently written could be made to be understood in that fashion.

While I have some concerns with the provisions in the bill, the overall bill provides many benefits to our troops and their families, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to my friend and colleague, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Chairman, I am here today to speak in favor of the National Defense Authorization Act, and I am very privileged to serve as the chairman of the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee.

I first want to begin by thanking Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH for their support for the provisions in the bill that go to address the important issue of sexual assault in the military.

Ms. TSONGAS and I were tasked by the ranking member and the chairman to come up with a bipartisan solution. We worked directly with the staffs of both the ranking member and the chair, and we believe that we have put provisions in this bill with the full bipartisan support of the committee, which will end the re-victimization of the victim. We have a problem of sexual assault in the military, and that

problem is that the perpetrators feel safe and that the victims feel insecure and re-victimized. This bill includes provisions of the Turner-Tsongas BE SAFE Act. It also includes provisions from Representatives HECK, WALORSKI, NOEM, CASTRO, SANCHEZ, and DUCKWORTH.

Basically, this bill will strip commanders of their authority to dismiss a conviction for a serious offense by a court-martial, and it significantly limits the commander's ability to modify or dismiss the sentence determined by a court-martial, but we go even beyond that.

This bill says if you commit a sexual assault, you are out. If you have an inappropriate relationship between a trainer and a trainee, you are out. No longer will it be tolerated for someone to commit a sexual assault and stay in the military. No longer will victims ever have to passionately tell in a hearing before Congress that they were forced to salute someone who had committed a sexual assault against them.

We ask for the Department of Defense to convene an independent panel to review all of the Uniform Code of Military Justice as it applies to sexual assault so that we can see if there are additional provisions and reforms that need to be enacted.

I want to thank my ranking member, LORETTA SANCHEZ, on the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee. We have worked together to make our priority that of serving our men and women in uniform in the area of Afghanistan. Also, we've added over \$1.3 billion in the President's budget that was requested to be authorized to address urgent operational needs for the warfighter, including counter-improvised explosive device requirements.

The bill includes support for the production in our Nation's heavy armored vehicle industrial base by maintaining the minimum sustained production of upgrade modifications for the Abrams tanks and heavy improved recovery vehicles.

The committee bill retains the Air Force's Global Hawk Block 30 unmanned intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft to support the deployed warfighter rather than placing these aircraft in storage as the Air Force plans to do.

The committee bill also addresses the critical need to reduce the weight of individual warfighter equipment, improve acquisition practices used for this gear, and it requires the Secretary of Defense to assess options for providing personnel protection equipment specifically fitted for the female warfighter.

Our subcommittee is very proud to look at all of the aspects and ways that we can support the warfighter. Again, I want to thank the chair and the ranking member for their steadfast support in addressing the epidemic issue that we have of sexual assault in the military.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ten-

nessee (Mr. COOPER), who is the ranking member on the Strategic Forces Subcommittee.

Mr. COOPER. I thank my friend and colleague from Washington State for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the work of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee. I would particularly like to thank Chairman ROGERS for his friendship and bipartisan leadership, as well as to thank all of the members of the subcommittee.

I support the many provisions in the bill that strengthen our national security.

The bill, for example, maintains a safe, secure and reliable nuclear arsenal while improving the effective oversight of the National Nuclear Security Administration's cost assessments, efforts and planning.

The bill supports nuclear non-proliferation efforts, including an increase of \$23 million to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapons.

The bill increases funding for regional missile defense assets to protect our deployed forces and allies, including important cooperation with Israel against short- and medium-range missile threats.

The bill authorizes defense environmental cleanup activities; and, finally, the bill supports investments in military and space assets.

However, I also should report that I do have reservations about several provisions in the bill that, in my opinion, undermine national security and waste taxpayer dollars.

For example, the bill blocks prudent nuclear weapons reductions, including New START reductions, which would strengthen strategic stability.

The bill increases funding for nuclear weapons by \$220 million over the President's already generous budget request.

The bill accelerates the funding of the Ground-Based Midcourse Defense program spending by nearly \$250 million, and it jumps to conclusions about east coast missile defense sites against the best military advice of our generals.

Finally, the bill changes NNSA health and safety oversight, undermining the independent oversight of defense nuclear sites related to worker and public protection as well as increasing the Secretary of Energy's authority to fire employees without due process.

I look forward, Mr. Chairman, to debating the merits of these and other provisions of the bill.

□ 1810

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to my friend and colleague, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chairman, as chairman of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, I rise in support of H.R. 1960, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2014.

It's important to understand what this bill does and why it deserves our support. For example:

It streamlines the acquisition of 14 ground-based interceptors announced by the Secretary of Defense on March 15, saving the taxpayer hundreds of millions of dollars;

It ensures that strategic competitors do not gain inadvertent access to vital systems or information because of reliance on commercial sitcom providers;

It prohibits the transfer of some missile defense technology to Russia and strengthens congressional oversight of administration efforts with regards to U.S.-Russia missile defense cooperation generally;

It invests in proven and vital systems like the Iron Dome and short-range rocket defense systems;

It provides significant resources above the President's request for other Israeli cooperative missile defense programs like Arrow 2, Arrow 3, and the David's Sling weapons system;

It forces efficiencies and prioritization of critical nuclear modernization programs in the budget of the National Nuclear Security Administration; and

It implements several initiatives to improve security at the National Nuclear Security Administration and NSA, and streamlines the process to terminate DOE employees negligent in their duties at category 1 nuclear material sites like the Y-12 site.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the full committee chairman, BUCK McKEON, for his leadership this year. Without him, this process would not have worked nearly as well. And I also want to thank my friend and colleague, the ranking member from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER), who has been a great partner in this process.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO), who is the ranking member on the Readiness Subcommittee.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Chairman, I want to say at the onset that I've enjoyed very much working in a bipartisan manner with the chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee, Mr. ROB WITTMAN, also the chair of the full committee, Mr. McKEON, and the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. ADAM SMITH. I want to thank also the committee and professional staff for the many long hours that they've put into getting this bill ready.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 1960. This bill works to ensure that our men and women in uniform are well trained and equipped to defend our Nation and its allies.

Although this bill represents the hard work and efforts of both the majority and the minority, I want to highlight the need to resolve sequestration. I hope that this Congress undertakes serious efforts to finally fix sequestration with a comprehensive solution. We can avoid this problem.

I would like to highlight a few important readiness issues.

The bill provides a 1-year extension of authority for certain pay and benefits to civilian personnel who are forward deployed, performing critical operations overseas and in combat zones. We are also requiring GAO to look into how the furloughs of civilian employees are being implemented by the Department of Defense to ensure they are implemented in a fair and equitable manner and to understand the impact on mission execution.

The bill addresses sustainment issues for two important procurement programs: the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and the LCS. We must understand the costs associated with the sustainment of these programs over the long term to make informed decisions about the future of these programs. The bill also contains a provision that will close loopholes that allow MSC and Navy to repair an increasing number of ships overseas.

I am especially pleased to note that this bill puts real resources into the rebalance of our military toward the Asia-Pacific region. The bill takes a commonsense approach and rolls back restrictive language that hampers the obligation and the expenditure of Government of Japan funds, which is positive for our bilateral relationship with the Government of Japan. The bill continues the House's consistent position of support of the realignment of forces in this region.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I yield the gentlelady an additional 1 minute.

Ms. BORDALLO. We also provide funding for the LCS, continued development of the next generation long-range strike bomber, and robust procurement of Virginia class submarines, which are all assets that are important to our rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region.

However, I am concerned about section 233 in the underlying bill. I appreciate the intent of this provision. We do need to ensure the defense of our allies in East Asia. Yet this provision unduly restricts our combatant commanders from providing support to emerging threats or supporting other allies in other areas. The provision is unnecessary, and it negatively impacts our military's readiness. I hope that the Rules Committee will make my amendment in order to improve the provision.

Again, I thank my colleagues, and I urge all my colleagues to support this vitally important bill.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to my friend and colleague, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES).

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014.

With Chairman MCKEON's and Ranking Member SMITH's leadership, I be-

lieve that this bill provides the right authorities and sufficient resources to demonstrate our resounding and unequivocal support for the men and women who place their service to country above all things. I think we could all learn from their service and devotion.

As to the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee mark, I continue to be concerned about both the size and composition of our Navy's fleet. In the 30-year shipbuilding plan, the administration has indicated a requirement of 306 ships. The 2010 QDR independent panel indicated a requirement of 346 ships. Unfortunately, the Navy has proposed a reduction of the fleet to 270 ships in just the next year. Various outside experts have indicated that if we continue to support our current level of shipbuilding investments, the fleet could be reduced further to just 240 ships. This path is simply unacceptable.

Given the budget cuts of the past 4 years, which I opposed, I think this bill does a good job of reversing some of these negative trends and takes a step in the right direction by authorizing eight combat ships and ensuring that we retain and modernize our current fleet to the end of their service life.

I remain very pleased with the direction of our projection forces. This bill provides strategic Air Force investments in terms of both the KC-46A tanker program and the Long-Range Strike Bomber. These are critical capabilities that need to be nurtured carefully.

This mark also includes important cost-saving initiatives that provide the Navy and Air Force with the ability to procure E-2D Hawkeye and C-130H Super Hercules aircraft using multiyear procurement authority. These legislative provisions alone are projected to save taxpayers over \$1 billion.

As I look to the future, I believe that it's essential to ensure strategy drives our debate.

Mr. Chairman, we've gone a long ways to reverse some of these negative trends. I think this bill does a good job of supporting our forces, and I would urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I thank my colleague and friend, MIKE MCINTYRE, my ranking member, and our hardworking staff for their efforts in producing this bill.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, could you please let us know how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington has 12½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS), who is the ranking member on the Oversight Investigation Committee and also has done fabulous work on the sexual assault legislation contained in this bill.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Chairman, this year's NDAA takes unprecedented

steps to address a disturbing prevalence of sexual assault in the military, and I want to thank Chairman MCKEON, Ranking Member SMITH, Congressman WILSON, and Congresswoman DAVIS for including these provisions in the bill. I'd also like to thank my co-chair of the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus, Congressman MIKE TURNER.

In recent months, we have seen reports rise, military commanders and supervisors abuse their authority, and officers in charge of sexual assault prevention efforts allegedly commit the crimes they were sworn to stop. This is a systemic problem, and the NDAA takes real consequential actions in response.

This NDAA begins to reform the power of a military commander, the first major bipartisan effort in decades to make such a significant change on the command structure.

□ 1820

Commanders will no longer have the authority to dismiss court-martial convictions for serious offenses, including sexual assault, and are prohibited from reducing guilty findings for serious offenses. It makes sure that those who are convicted of sexual assault will, at a minimum, be dishonorably discharged or dismissed. And this bill continues our push to provide victims of sexual assault with access to legal counsel, which is a critical step in the process of creating an environment that encourages victims to report these crimes and in bringing those responsible to justice.

These, and others, are significant reforms that offer considerable momentum toward changing the deeply rooted and flawed culture that has allowed these crimes to pervade our Armed Forces. We are making progress, but there is a long way to go.

Last year's bill established a nine-member independent review panel to evaluate the systems used to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate sexual assault crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The members of this panel are just getting to work now, and their input, 1 year from now, will be invaluable in making sure that Congress continues its work to make the best reforms possible and end the scourge of sexual assault.

I look forward to continuing to work with many Members in both Chambers, the victims who have bravely come forward, and the committed military leaders who are all meaningfully contributing to this debate to ensure that this issue can never again be disregarded or ignored.

I also want to take a moment to highlight the important work that this bill advances to develop superior, lightweight body armor for our servicemembers. While the ceramic plates which our servicemembers insert into their tactical vests have always provided the requisite level of protection in Iraq and Afghanistan, they are unfortunately

still too heavy and are causing an epidemic of musculoskeletal injuries among servicemembers, which the VA will be paying for over decades to come.

Last year, the NDAA contained language requiring the continued development of body armor systems for female servicemembers, as the legacy systems fit poorly.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlelady.

Ms. TSONGAS. Lightweight body armor that hadn't been designed for female members put female soldiers at greater risk in the field. This year's bill requires the Secretary of Defense to submit a comprehensive R&D strategy for lightweight body armor to Congress. I believe this is an important step, and I thank Air and Land Subcommittee Chair TURNER and Ranking Member SANCHEZ for their work on this matter.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), my friend and colleague, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Chairman, I am proud to rise in support of H.R. 1960, and I would like to thank my chairman and the ranking member and all of the subcommittee chairmen and ranking members for all of the hard work that has gone into this bill. This is a strong, bipartisan bill that properly funds our military. It provides for our men and women in uniform and their families, while ensuring that our warfighters have the necessary equipment and provisions to continue to ensure our Nation's security.

I am honored to chair the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee. I am pleased to have as my colleague and ranking member Ms. TSONGAS of Massachusetts.

The world has changed tremendously in the past decade. It remains a dangerous place, but in new and challenging ways. For this reason, H.R. 1960 takes into account the threats this Nation faces today and the forces that we must maintain in response. The members of the House Armed Services Committee are united in the belief that we must not return to the days of a "holow" military decried by General Edward "Shy" Meyer 33 years ago.

Indeed, H.R. 1960 addresses part of our military's current readiness crisis. It restores funding so planes can take flight, ships can sail, and our military can train at the pace and scope that's necessary. This bill responsibly responds to the global conditions, but does so within this Nation's fiscal constraints.

H.R. 1960 also ensures that, as Afghan forces assume an incredibly large role in Afghanistan's defense, preserving the safety and security of Afghan women will be among our priorities. It

includes important provisions so that the Department of Defense understands the lessons of Benghazi and organizes its forces to preclude or better respond to a similar attack. This year's National Defense Authorization Act maintains that the detention facility in Guantanamo Bay is being funded, operated, and managed properly; and it also provides the necessary guidance relating to Iran, North Korea, and Syria.

I'm proud to represent two distinguished military installations, Maxwell Air Force Base and Fort Rucker, and I'm mindful of the important role these and all other installations around the world play in ensuring the defense of this great Nation.

In light of the strong provisions included in H.R. 1960 and the collaborative, bipartisan sentiments upon which it rests, I join my colleagues in urging support for the National Defense Authorization Act.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Chairman, I thank my friend for yielding, and I would like to thank and congratulate him and Chairman MCKEON and their outstanding staffs for first-rate work and leadership on this issue.

This bill is an example of a properly resourced and properly thought-out plan that would serve the interests of those who serve us. As we meet tonight, there are America's best sons and daughters stationed around the world in dangerous and often lonely places who are defending our freedom and doing us proud every single day. I do believe this budget plan is one that gives them the tools and the support that they need. It has many good things to recommend it.

But I wish it were actually going to take effect, because the fact of the matter is unless this Congress acts, this plan will never take effect. Instead, it will be about \$50 billion shy of the resources that we're going to debate and vote on this week.

Mr. Chairman, I think the whole House would be well-served by following the example by which this legislation was put together. Led by Chairman MCKEON and Mr. SMITH, there was open, transparent, substantive dialogue throughout this process. Members on both sides of the aisle met for—my goodness, was it 16 hours, 18 hours, it seemed like longer, and any idea that any Member had was brought to the body, was vigorously debated, and either approved or disapproved. There was an open process that led to a good piece of legislation.

This is exactly the opposite of what we've done on the sequestration problem. There have been backroom meetings. There have been high-level discussions, and absolutely nothing has

happened. This, frankly, is a bipartisan responsibility of a national problem.

I think that what is incumbent upon us doing here is the budget that has passed this Chamber and the budget that has passed the other body should be brought to a conference, and our body should select our conferees, and I'm sure the other body will select its, and they will thrash out this process and, I hope, come to a resolution of this mindless, harmful sequestration process.

About a third of our Navy and Air Force planes aren't flying training missions because of sequestration. There's intelligence training for intelligence units throughout the services not being done because of sequestration. Important research and development, deferred maintenance on our capital stock, isn't being done because of this problem.

We have spent hours in this Chamber accusing each other of whose fault it is that we are in this box. I, frankly, think the American people are tired of hearing whose fault it is and are ready to see this problem resolved.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. ANDREWS. I thank my friend.

The way to solve this problem is to emulate the example Chairman MCKEON and Mr. SMITH have given us: have a fair, transparent, open process; debate the issues; make some difficult choices. There are other difficult choices yet to make because of the amendments that are forthcoming.

When the Members are given the chance to act in regular order, we can solve problems. Let's have that full and open debate on sequestration; and some day the plan that we're going to pass this week will actually take effect.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM), my friend and colleague and a member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mrs. NOEM. I thank the chairman for leading and for all of his hard work on this very important bill that we have on the floor today.

Mr. Chairman, the number is staggering: 26,000. That's how many military members were sexually assaulted last year alone; and thousands more were unwilling to come forward. Since 2010, there has been a 35 percent increase in military sexual assault.

□ 1830

This is a disturbing trend that needs to be stopped, and I would like to thank the chairman for working with me and for many other members on the committee to do just exactly that.

There's no doubt that our military is the strongest and most capable force in the world. The men and women who voluntarily step up to serve and to defend this country know full well that they will be called, potentially, to serve in times of danger. But they

should never, under any circumstances, feel threatened in one another's presence. For many, the military is an extension of family, and nothing hurts more than being hurt or let down by one of your own.

Last week, the House Armed Services Committee passed the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act by an overwhelming vote of 59-2. I was proud to support the bill in committee. It takes important steps to address the rise of sexual assault in our military, including several provisions that I authored. These provisions will improve military sexual assault investigations. They will also standardize sexual assault prevention training programs, and require the Pentagon to increase scrutiny of those selected that will fill sexual assault prevention positions in the military, necessary reforms that need to get done.

For years, lawmakers, military officials, and civilians, alike, have discussed the need to bring an end to sexual assault. I see a real opportunity with this bill to put those words into action, to take meaningful steps to address this growing problem.

It's time to say, once and for all, that sexual assault ends now. In order to do that, we need to ensure that there are adequate protections in place that encourage the reporting of sexual assaults without fear of reprisal or further abuse from peers. We must provide support for victims and insist on swift punishment for those responsible.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2014 and, again, I want to congratulate the chairman and the ranking member and the committee staff for a process that was really a breath of fresh air in this Congress—a long meeting, lots of hot debates and passionate debates, many opportunities, frankly, for the polarization that seems to dominate this Congress to break down the process.

But at the end of the day, we had a strong vote, 59-2, obviously very bipartisan, and we came together as a committee to make sure that core functions of the government, our national defense are, in fact, going to be advanced. In particular, I want to focus for a moment on the bipartisan effort made in the Seapower and Projection Force Subcommittee to support our Nation's shipbuilding priorities.

This bill supports the President's budget request for continued projection of two Virginia-class submarines in 2014, building on our efforts last year to restore a boat that had been removed from the shipbuilding plan. This measure also continues investment in critical undersea capabilities, such as the replacement of our SSBN fleet and the Virginia Payload Module.

In particular, and also, the bill supports construction of eight battle force

ships, four littoral combat ships, a DDG 51 destroyer, as well as continued work on a new aircraft carrier and vital seapower programs. To put that in context, the build rate in 2006 was only four battle force ships; in 2008, it was only three battle force ships.

As we have heard firsthand in our subcommittee, a stable, predictable, and robust shipbuilding plan is the best way to ensure that our taxpayers are getting cost-effective ships with the block grant fixed price model that is producing ships ahead of schedule and below price. I know this is an issue that our panel will continue to look at closely as we move forward.

In 2011, in Libya, we saw firsthand the value of a strong Naval force, where Operation Odyssey Dawn used seapower to wipe out the air defense system of Muammar Qadhafi. Again, using surface ships and submarines firing Tomahawk missiles, in a matter of hours we had advanced the cause for our NATO allies to finish up the work. So this is, again, critical to the refocus of our naval and strategic plan in Asia-Pacific and the Middle East.

Again, we need a strong shipbuilding plan and naval force structure, which this bill will provide strong resources, again, far greater than in past years.

So, again, I want to close by saluting the chairman's tremendous work and our staff, in terms of making sure that both sides of the aisle came together to protect core functions of our government, which, again, the Seapower Subcommittee, in particular, will advance.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI), my friend and colleague, and a member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee for yielding me time. I also want to thank him for his tremendous leadership, and Mr. SMITH, as well, in crafting a bill that brings solutions to combat sexual violence in the Armed Forces.

This bill includes a provision that I authored with Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ to encourage victims to step out of the darkness. The provision specifically identifies reports of sexual assault as a form of communication under whistleblower protections. It ensures that victims cannot face reprisal for reporting acts of sexual assault.

Sexual violence has reached epidemic proportions and is eroding the foundations of trust that our military traditions have been built upon.

I had the privilege to visit our troops in Afghanistan and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the finest military in the world. Hearing their concerns on this issue firsthand typifies the horrific reality of this situation.

Mr. Chairman, there were an estimated 26,000 cases of military sexual assault last year alone, with only 3,600 victims reporting. It's reported that 62 percent of those who have been assaulted went on to experience some form of retaliation.

Citing these facts and figures does not attest to the victims and the real-life faces of this problem. We're talking about our sons and daughters. We are talking about our brothers and sisters.

In Indiana, a brave woman named Lisa Wilken, an Air Force veteran, came forward to share her own story of repetitive sexual abuse that she suffered during her military career. After being raped, she reported the incident to the Air Force. Her description of the reporting process was chilling. Whistleblower protections like what I'm talking about today will create an environment for safe reporting so that victims like Lisa can come forward and demand justice.

For the troops who've been victimized while serving their country and the countless Americans who some day want to serve in this great military, I ask that we do the right thing. It's time for this Congress to do the right thing, and it's time for this Congress to act. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill and the thoughtful reforms contained within.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I just, again, want to emphasize how important this piece of legislation is, and the work that goes into it.

And all the Members have said this is the way legislation is supposed to work. It really does work when you do the legislative process, when you have committee hearings and you debate amendments and you put together a product.

And also to remind folks how important this piece of legislation is. It funds and supports our military in providing for the national security of this country. It is critically important that we pass it and get it done.

I do also, however, want to emphasize the point that Mr. ANDREWS made, and that is that, unfortunately, unless we do something about sequestration, this bill is going to be largely undone. Taking \$50 billion out of this budget in a meat-ax fashion will not be helpful. We have to do something about sequestration if we're going to be able to protect this process.

So I would urge the full body to follow the example of the Armed Services Committee: get together, work out a bipartisan solution to make sure that we can protect this work and not just the national security.

Sequestration obviously affects all parts of government in a very, very negative way; infrastructure, education, health care all jeopardized by the sequestration legislation. So I would urge us to deal with that.

But, in the meantime, I thank the chairman and I thank all the members and the staff for the great work that they've done in putting together this bill, and I urge support.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. McKEON. Might I inquire how much time we have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has 4½ minutes.

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of the time.

At this time, I'd like to thank Mr. SMITH. This is our third bill that we've worked on in these positions, and I think we've become better friends over the years. We understand each other. We know that we, at times, will have disagreements.

I have to confess, I've been married now 50 years, and my wife and I have had a couple of disagreements. I was always wrong, and she's stood by me, and we've had a great relationship.

And we have a great relationship working in this committee. Likewise, our staff. I think they have done yeoman's work to get us to this point. And our subcommittee chairmen and ranking members that we've heard speak here today.

And I have to agree with Mr. SMITH on the sequestration.

□ 1840

We, I think, all understand that this is bad for our Nation. We voted on it, those of us who did, knowing that, understanding that it would never happen. Well, reality set in, and it happened. I've had a few people come to me and say, gee, sequestration isn't that bad. They really haven't seen the full impact to this point. We're just starting into the first year of sequestration. And I was meeting with General Breedlove today, our new European commander. And he's just a month into his new job, and he's starting to feel the sequestration.

I think what we need to understand is—and I've talked to each of our military leaders as they came in and secretaries as they came before our committee for the hearings that led up to this bill—that if something doesn't happen between now and September 30, all of this work, everything that we're working on is, as Mr. SMITH has pointed out, going away. We are cutting \$487 billion out of defense over the next 10 years. That's in the bill. We also, through sequestration, cut another \$500 billion out of defense over the next 10 years. That is not reflected in this bill. Our Budget Committee in the House passed a budget, and they kept the top line number from the Budget Control Act of \$967 billion, and they gave us additional money for defense, which we've used in this bill. But if we're not able to resolve the differences between us and the Senate on September 30, it will be like Cinderella and that magic shoe. Everything goes away. The carriage becomes a cantaloupe, or a pumpkin, and it's bad times.

We've got to deal with that, we've got to deal with raising the debt limit, and there are a lot of very serious things on the table. So I would encourage all of our colleagues to join in the debate tomorrow.

We had a great debate in committee. We had differences, and we talked about them. We didn't get personal,

and we didn't get rancorous. We came out with a vote of 59-2 because everybody on this committee understands how important our work is, how important our national defense is, and how important the men and the women and their families in uniform are, and we stand behind them. Now we do need to make sure that we have the resources that they need.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I would encourage all of us to support this bill tomorrow. Join in the process. Make it a better bill if we can.

I yield back the balance of my time. The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia) having assumed the chair, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1960) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

AMERICA'S FUTURE

(Mr. COLLINS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, my friends on the other side of the aisle like to refer to the House majority as the Party of No. And do you know what? I'm okay with that. We've said no to unending and out-of-control spending and passed a budget that balances in 10 years. We've said no to the largest tax increase in history and repealed ObamaCare. We said no to fraud and political games and demanded answers from the Internal Revenue Service.

We've said no to the fact that four Americans in Benghazi are dead and we will not rest until we have answers. We've said no to the tax more, spend more, save less, Big Government, job killing machine that is crushing the American spirit and our economic growth.

We've replaced government growth and regulations with reform. We have restored transparency and trust. We're giving our Nation a reason to believe that one day our children won't be looking for a job, they will be creating jobs.

America was founded by patriots who said no to the tyrannical government that was crushing their freedom and economic future. And America's future rests in the hands of those who will carry on the torch of freedom to protect the future of their children and grandchildren. America's future rests in the hands of those who are sometimes willing to say no.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, State governments, institutions, businesses and private individuals are organizing to meet the challenges and opportunities of climate change.

For example, experts from New York State's land-grant college, Cornell University, have partnered with others at McGill University in Montreal and the private sector to define the needs of the region's agricultural sector in a warmer climate. Farmers will need new plant varieties. The longer growing season will open possibilities for growing new crops. The timing of planting and fertilizing will change.

Pest management will, indeed, be different. Climate change can be approached with a positive perspective for agriculture, but only if we plan now to take advantage of new opportunities and prepare for the transition.

So where are we, as a body, on this issue? We should be talking climate change and taking it into account as we move a new 5-year farm bill forward. We should be taking action to adapt our infrastructure and economy to these changes. But there is no discussion or action on this crucial issue.

Change is underway. We have little time to lose. We can meet this challenge, slow down the rate of change, adapt to the new conditions and take advantage of new opportunities, but only if we begin today.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me just say I am truly honored tonight to anchor this Special Order on the farm bill on behalf of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. And I just want to thank our cochairs, Congressman KEITH ELLISON and Congressman RAÚL GRIJALVA, for their tremendous leadership and for giving us the opportunity to really speak to the American people once a week about what has truly taken place here in Washington, D.C.

As the cochair of the Out-of-Poverty Caucus, which we founded actually during the Bush administration, and now chair of the new Democratic Whip Task Force on Poverty and Opportunity, let me just highlight how truly important it is to continue to support programs that lift Americans out of poverty.

Even as our economy slowly recovers, income inequality continues to grow. Unfortunately, too many people who are working are poor, and they're living on the edge.

I want to take a moment now and just yield a few minutes to my colleague from Minnesota, the cochair of